

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 29, 2021

The Honorable Sanford D. Bishop
Chairman
Subcommittee on Agriculture; House Ap-
propriations Committee
2362-A Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Jeff Fortenberry
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Agriculture; House Ap-
propriations Committee
2362-A Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Bishop and Ranking Member Fortenberry,

We are writing to urge you and your colleagues on the House Appropriations Committee's Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration and Related Agencies to restore funding to the House-passed \$15 million for the Animal Plant and Health Inspection Service (APHIS) for Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) cooperative agreements with state wildlife agencies.

CWD is a contagious, 100% fatal prion disease that causes emaciation, abnormal behavior, and other neurological symptoms in cervids such as deer, elk, and moose across the nation. Each year, new states are added to the list of CWD-positive regions, increasing pressure upon America's wildlife and causing uncertainty amongst outdoorsmen and women about the future of these species.

CWD threatens our whitetail hunting culture and therefore our model of conservation funding. Deer hunting contributes nearly \$40 billion to the U.S. economy and roughly \$5.5 billion in state and local tax revenue on an annual basis.

By way of the Pittman-Robertson Act, many of the purchases hunters make support state conservation efforts. Additionally, the sale of mule deer, white-tailed deer, and elk hunting license account for the highest proportion of state fishing wildlife agency funding in many states. Research demonstrates that as CWD spreads and wariness around the disease grows, the number of licenses and equipment purchased by hunters declines significantly. This means state fish and wildlife agencies, who are on the front lines combatting this disease, are becoming increasingly cash strapped at the same time their efforts to combat the disease should be increasing.

We appreciate the House Appropriations Committee's leadership in restoring the critical federal investment in CWD response by state wildlife agencies in Fiscal Year (FY) 2020. In FY20, the full House of Representatives voted in support of providing \$15 million for the APHIS' Equine, Cervid and Small Ruminant Health program to renew CWD cooperative agreements with state wildlife agencies. However, after Senate consideration, the appropriation was reduced to \$5 million, to be divided by state wildlife and agriculture agencies in impacted states. In FY21, the committee built on that investment, growing the appropriation to \$7 million. Ultimately, these critical funds supported the CWD management and surveillance, outreach, and education

activities of 15 state wildlife agencies. However, as of January 2021, CWD has been detected in 339 counties in 25 states and continues to outpace available funding.

As the Committee considers appropriations for FY 2022, we encourage you to once again support \$15 million for the APHIS Equine, Cervid and Small Ruminant Health Program, to assist state wildlife agencies in the containment of CWD outbreaks.

Increasing funding to APHIS means preserving America's whitetail hunting traditions. Let's support these critical federal-state cooperative agreements to ensure that state fish and wildlife agencies have the necessary funding to monitor and respond to this growing threat to wildlife health and conservation funding. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ron Kind".

Ron Kind
Member of Congress

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Pete Stauber".

Pete Stauber
Member of Congress

Member of Congress

Restore APHIS Funding for Critical Wildlife Disease Response – Chronic Wasting Disease
List of Signatories
April 28, 2021

/s/ Antonio Delgado
/s/ Paul A. Gosar, D.D.S.
/s/ Tom Emmer
/s/ Debbie Dingell
/s/ Cheri Bustos
/s/ Tom Tiffany
/s/ Raúl M. Grijalva
/s/ Jimmy Panetta
/s/ Clay Higgins
/s/ Angie Craig
/s/ Glenn "G.T." Thompson
/s/ Bruce Westerman
/s/ Robert C. "Bobby" Scott
/s/ Peter Welch
/s/ Jack Bergman
/s/ Marc Veasey
/s/ Julia Letlow
/s/ August Pfluger
/s/ Doug LaMalfa
/s/ Glenn Grothman
/s/ Liz Cheney